

Judiciary Committee Public Hearing Testimony - March 21, 2016

Good morning, Chairman Coleman, Chairman Tong and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am Brian Anderson speaking for the union local that represents 2,300 municipal police officers around the state of Connecticut and is part of Council 4 AFSCME.

Our union urges you to reject section 1 of SB 467, ***AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS.***

This section would prohibit body camera use as a subject of collective bargaining. This is inadvisable for several reasons.

The most successful institutions value frontline worker input. Rank and file police officers do the actual policing. They have much of value to add in the use of this new technology. Shutting the door on their input for the use of cameras will make camera use less effective.

Top down decisions often yield bad results. There are legitimate issues that officers wish to pursue in body camera use. Will cameras be able to be turned off when officers are using restroom facilities? Will cameras be able to be turned off when an officer is on meal break?

Other issues apply more directly to effective community policing. Often officers are stopped by citizens who provide valuable information that stops future crimes from occurring or leads to the apprehension of those committing crimes. It is now common for a citizen to approach a police officer and tell him/her of a neighbor who might be selling methamphetamine in the neighborhood and causing disruptions on the street. If cameras are unable to be turned off when a citizen reporting this sort of problem approaches an officer, then citizens will stop approaching officers. This will just lead to a worsening situation for a community.

The concept of collective bargaining is to allow as much creative discussion of work to occur as possible. Collective bargaining has led to vast productivity increases, quality improvements and workforce morale boosting. There is nothing about such discussions and negotiations that leads to workers being able to dictate to management. At the end of the

day, management has the ability to dictate the bulk of how a job is to be done. Please do not strip the workers' voice from such discussions.